

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KHARTO 01687 01 OF 02 190946Z
ACTION ICAE-00

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 NEA-10 PA-02 /023 W
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R 131214Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO USICA WASHDC
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 7097

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 KHARTOUM 1687

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

FOR ICA/AF, ICA/NEA

E.O. 11652: N/A
SUBJECT: REACTION TO ARAB JOURNALISTS PROGRAM

REF: (A) STATE 68569; (B) STATE 50396

SUMMARY: GAMAL ABDUL-MALIK ABDULLA (IBN KHALDOUN), SUDANESE PARTICIPANT IN SUBJECT MULTI-NATIONAL PROJECT, RECENTLY COMPLETED SERIES FIVE FAVORABLE ARTICLES REPORTING HIS U.S. VISIT FOR SUDAN'S LEADING ARABIC DAILY, AL-SAHAF. LENGTHY PRIVATE CONVERSATION WITH PARTICIPANT REVEALED STRONG, POSITIVE IMPRESSIONS AMERICAN SOCIETY AND INSTITUTIONS.
END SUMMARY.

1. IMMEDIATELY UPON HIS RETURN, ABDUL-MALIK BEGAN WRITING SERIES OF ARTICLES CONCERNING HIS VISIT TO U.S. PERHAPS REFLECTING UPWARD TREND IN SUDANESEAMERICAN RELATIONS, U.S. APPEARED IN FAVORABLE LIGHT. FOLLOWING ARE ARTICLE SYNOPSES:

(A) FEBRUARY 26--DESCRIBED PROGRAM AND
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SUMMARIZED DISCUSSIONS WITH OFFICIALS AND OPINION LEADERS IN GOVERNMENT, BUSINESS, ACADEMIA AND MEDIA. MILWAUKEE INCIDENT CITED REFTL (B) MENTIONED BRIEFLY WITHOUT COMMENT.
(B) MARCH 5-- AMERICAN PERCEPTIONS OF MIDEAST DISCUSSED. HE WROTE: "WE

DISCOVERED IN THE BEGINNING HOW LITTLE
WE KNEW OF AMERICAN THINKING AND BEHAVIOR.
WE ALSO GAINED IDEA OF HOW AMERICANS
PERCEIVE ARABS. IN THIS CONTEXT,
AMERICANS SEE ARABS AS SABOTAGING AND
IRRESPONSIBLE ELEMENT THREATENING
AMERICAN INTERESTS AND PROSPERITY."
HE CALLED FOR MAJOR ARAB INFORMATION
CAMPAIGN TO EXPLAIN THEIR SIDE TO AMERICANS.
(C) MARCH 7-- EXPLAINED HOW GOVERNMENT
DECISIONS ARE MADE IN U.S. EMPHASIZED
INTERACTION DIVERSE GROUPS IN PROCESS
MAKING IT DIFFICULT TO IDENTIFY SINGLE
AUTHOR OF DECISION. BRINGING DISCUSSION
ROUND TO MIDEAST ISSUE, HE URGED U.S.
TO "TAKE OPPORTUNITY AND WORK FOR A
COMPREHENSIVE PEACE THAT PRESERVES U.S.
INTEREST AND ARAB FRIENDSHIP."
(D) MARCH 14-- U.S. POSITION ON MIDEAST OUT-
LINED DERIVED LARGELY FROM RECENT WHITE
HOUSE OFFICIAL STATEMENTS. MENTIONED
POSITIVE CHANGE IN PUBLIC OPINION TOWARD ARABS.
(E) MARCH 20-- ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES U.S.
ECONOMIC SYSTEM FOCUS OF LAST ARTICLE.
ABDUL MALIK REPORTED GROUP IMPRESSION
THAT NOT ALL CITIZENS HAVE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY
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TO SHARE AMERICA'S WEALTH.
RETURNING TO AMERICAN DEMOCRATIC PROCESS DISCUSSED
IN MARCH 7 ARTICLE, ABDUL MALIK SAID: "THE NEGATIVE
SIDE OF THIS SYSTEM IS THAT IT MOVES SLOWLY...WHICH
MAKES ITS ACTION TOO LATE IN CASES OF CRISIS. BUT THIS
DOES NOT PREVENT IT FROM ABSORBING CHANGE THROUGH PEACEFUL
TRANSITION. ONE REASON FOR KEEPING THIS INERTIA IN
AMERICAN SYSTEM IS THAT IT RECOGNIZES IMPORTANCE OF
INTELLECTUALS AND ATTEMPTS TO ASSIMILATE EVEN THOSE WITH
DIFFERING IDEAS. CONSEQUENTLY, THE SYSTEM BENEFITS A GREAT
DEAL FROM THEM."

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2. SHORTLY AFTER LAST ARTICLE APPEARED, APAO HAD THREE-HOUR FRANK CONVERSATION COVERING ABDUL MALIK'S IMPRESSIONS OF PROJECT AND U.S. HE FOUND PROJECT VERY USEFUL AND WAS NOT DISTURBED BY ENCOUNTERS WITH HOSTILE GROUPS. INDEED, HE BELIEVED THEY ADDED TO EXPERIENCE. MOST IMPRESSIVE ASPECTS OF U.S. TO HIM ARE FREEDOM OF THOUGHT AND EXPRESSION. RECOGNIZES U.S. DEMOCRACY SERVED BY THESE AND OTHER FREEDOMS. APPRECIATES NECESSITY AMERICAN DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS IN AMERICAN CONTEXT BUT DOES NOT BELIEVE SYSTEM WOULD WORK IN EVERY COUNTRY. UNDERSTANDS BETTER U.S. DECISION-MAKING PROCESS, PARTICULARLY VARIED PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS WHICH COME INTO PLAY. PRESS FREEDOM GREATLY ADMIRED.

3. ABDUL MALIK HAS ALREADY LECTURED ON VISIT TO POLI SCI STUDENTS KHARTOUM UNIVERSITY. PLANS TO WRITE ADDITIONAL ARTICLES AFTER MORE REFLECTION. EXTREMELY INTERESTED KNOWING IF OTHER PARTICIPANTS HAVE WRITTEN ABOUT VISIT; HE WOULD APPRECIATE COPIES.
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Message Attributes

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